whole life is one long pilgrimage. He may have been born a prince, or the son of a beggar—no one can tell. Unlike his brother Hindus, his caste no man knoweth. If he were once a brahman, the sacred thread was cut when the ties of earth were broken. And now, with ash-smeared hair, and in the ascetic's yellow garment, he is one with the low-born pilgrim from his father's gates. As a Hindu explained it, "Just as in the West," he said, "the possession of material wealth makes all men equal, and if a man only has enough money he can associate with princes, so in the East spiritual things place men on the same level, and the most rigid social system in the world bends before the influence of religion/[3] And, so far, the ascetic caste does not exist. He has no home, no worldly goods, he never sleeps twice in the same place. Wherever he may be, he sweeps a little clean place under some shady tree, and there he rests, free from all earthly cares, his daily need supplied by the food the passers-by put in his little bowl A rich Hindu banker of

Bengal told me he never felt such calm as by an ascetic's temporary lodging. The square yard of swept ground was so clean and neat, and the atmosphere round its tenant so peaceful,



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